



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/862,997	05/23/2001	Satoshi Yuzawa	525/50004	7506

7590 05/10/2005

CROWELL & MORING, L.L.P.
P.O. Box 14300
Washington, DC 20044-4300

EXAMINER

NEGRON, ISMAEL

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2875

DATE MAILED: 05/10/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

41A

Office Action Summary	Application No.		Applicant(s)	
	09/862,997		YUZAWA ET AL.	
	Examiner		Art Unit	
	Ismael Negron		2875	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 17 September 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 16-27 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 16-27 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 16 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 19 September 2001 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Title

1. The title of the invention is not descriptive. A new title is required that is clearly indicative of the invention to which the claims are directed.

The following title is suggested: **Decorative Article having Translucent Wood Veneer.**

Abstract

Applicant is reminded of the proper content of an abstract of the disclosure.

A patent abstract is a concise statement of the technical disclosure of the patent and should include that which is new in the art to which the invention pertains. If the patent is of a basic nature, the entire technical disclosure may be new in the art, and the abstract should be directed to the entire disclosure. If the patent is in the nature of an improvement in an old apparatus, process, product, or composition, the abstract should include the technical disclosure of the improvement. If the new technical disclosure involves modifications or alternatives, the abstract should mention by way of example the preferred modification or alternative.

The abstract should not refer to purported merits or speculative applications of the invention and should not compare the invention with the prior art.

Where applicable, the abstract should include the following:

- (1) if a machine or apparatus, its organization and operation;
- (2) if an article, its method of making;
- (3) if a chemical compound, its identity and use;
- (4) if a mixture, its ingredients;

(5) if a process, the steps.

Extensive mechanical and design details of apparatus should not be given.

2. The abstract of the disclosure is objected to because it fails to concisely state the subject matter of the invention (e.g. the decorative article, not the method of manufacturing such article). Correction is required. See MPEP § 608.01(b).

Drawings

3. The drawings are objected to as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(4) because reference character “65” has been used to designate both “*substrate*” (page 2, line 24) and “*opaque substrate*” (page 4, line 20). In addition, note the following:

- reference character “1” used to designate “*veneer*” (page 18, line 7) and “*dyed veneer*” (page 20, line 3);
- reference character “2” used to designate “*adhesive*” (page 18, line 9) and “*colored adhesive*” (page 20, line 4);
- reference character “32” used to designate “*front veneer*” (page 29, line 1) and “*front veneer sheet*” (page 29, line 2);
- reference character “65” used to designate “*design layer*” (page 31, line 24) and “*colored design layer*” (page 32, line 5); and
- reference character “44” used to designate “*reinforcing member*” (page 35, line 22) and “*colored reinforcing member*” (page 4, line 20).

4. The drawings are objected to as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(4) because reference character "31" has been used to designate different parts in different embodiments. See Figures 6-13, where different wood-based decorative articles are disclosed.

In addition, note the following:

- reference character "33" as used in Figures 12 and 13, where two different substrate structures are disclosed; and
- reference character "41" as used in Figures 12 and 13, where different wood-based decorative articles are disclosed.

5. The applicant is advised that the reference characters must be properly applied, with no single reference character being used for two different parts or for a given part and a modification of such part. See MPEP §608.01(g).

Applicant is further advised that this action only exemplifies the objections to the drawings, applicant's cooperation is requested in correcting all the occurrences of the cited, or any other errors of which applicant may become aware in the specification.

Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either "Replacement Sheet" or "New Sheet" pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of

Art Unit: 2875

any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Objections

6. Claim 16 is objected to because of the following informalities: it recites the limitation "*having a transparent property*" (lines 3 and 4) without providing in the specification a clear and precise definition for the specific "property" recited by the claim.

The cited lack of clarity does not amount to indefinitiveness under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, since it is readily apparent that the applicant intended to claim a *translucent* wood veneer; however, appropriate correction is required to place the claims in proper form for allowance.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

7. Claims 16-18, 21, 24 and 27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by LENDERINK (U.S. Pat. 5,194,310).

LENDERINK discloses a decorative article having:

- **a wood veneer (as recited in Claim 16)**, Figure 1, reference number 10;
- **the veneer being translucent (as recited in Claim 16)**, column 5, lines 3-5;
- **a substrate (as recited in Claim 16)**, Figure 1, reference number 11;
- **the substrate being formed of a transparent synthetic resin (as recited in Claim 16)**, column 2, lines 58-60;
- **the substrate being joined to a rear surface of the veneer (as recited in Claim 16)**, column 2, lines 42-44;
- **a transparent reinforcing member (as recited in Claim 17)**, Figure 1, reference number 12;
- **the reinforcing member being interposed between the veneer and the substrate (as recited in Claim 17)**, as seen in Figure 1;
- **at least one of the veneer and the reinforcing member being impregnated with a transparent synthetic resin (as recited in Claim 18)**, as evidenced by column 4, line 68;
- **a light source (as recited in Claim 21)**, column 5, lines 1-5;
- **the light source being located at a rear surface of the substrate (as recited in Claim 21)**, as evidenced by column 4, line 68;

Art Unit: 2875

- **a display member (as recited in Claim 24)**, as evidenced by column 3, lines 59-68;
- **the display member being provided on a front surface of the veneer (as recited in Claim 24)**, as evidenced by column 3, lines 59-68;
- **the display member being for displaying predetermined information (as recited in Claim 24)**, as evidenced by column 3, lines 59-68;
- **a topcoat (as recited in Claim 27)**, column 4, line 4; and
- **the topcoat being applied to a front surface of the veneer (as recited in Claim 27)**, column 4, lines 3 and 4.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

8. Claims 19, 20 and 26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over LENDERINK (U.S. Pat. 5,194,310) in view of LUNDBERG (U.S. Pat. 3,271,568).

LENDERINK discloses a decorative article having:

- **a wood veneer (as recited in Claim 16)**, Figure 1, reference number 10;
- **the veneer being translucent (as recited in Claim 16)**, column 5, lines 3-5;
- **a substrate (as recited in Claim 16)**, Figure 1, reference number 11;
- **the substrate being formed of a transparent synthetic resin (as recited in Claim 16)**, column 2, lines 58-60; and
- **the substrate being joined to a rear surface of the veneer (as recited in Claim 16)**, column 2, lines 42-44.

LENDERINK discloses all the limitations of the claims, except a design layer for increasing variation of a design of the veneer, such design layer being arranged on at least one of the front and rear surfaces of the substrate (as recited in Claim 19), the design layer being removably attached to the rear surface of the substrate (as recited in Claim 20), or at least part of the substrate being formed of an opaque synthetic resin (as recited in Claim 26).

LUNDBERG discloses a decorative mural apparatus for windows, such apparatus having:

- **a window shade**, Figure 1, reference number 10;
- **the window shade including a design layer**, Figure 2, reference number 26;

- **the design layer including a translucent substrate**, column 1, lines 60 and 61;
- **the translucent substrate including a design**, column 1, lines 63-66;
- **a light source**, Figure 2, reference number 27; and
- **the light source being for illuminating the design layer**, column 2, lines 40-43.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the claimed invention was made to combine the translucent wood veneer blinds of LENDERINK with the decorative mural apparatus of LUNDBERG, to obtain a device capable of providing the illusion of a desirable and pleasant view from any window, as per the teachings of LUNDBERG (see column 2, lines 60-68).

Regarding at least part of the substrate being formed of an opaque synthetic resin (as recited in Claim 26), the design layer 26 of LUNDBERG, being painted with design, was considered to include an opaque portion.

9. Claims 22, 23 and 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over LENDERINK (U.S. Pat. 5,194,310) and MCMANIGAL (U.S. Pat. 5,253,051).

LENDERINK discloses a decorative article having:

- **a wood veneer (as recited in Claim 16)**, Figure 1, reference number 10;

- **the veneer being translucent (as recited in Claim 16),** column 5, lines 3-5;
- **a substrate (as recited in Claim 16),** Figure 1, reference number 11;
- **the substrate being formed of a transparent synthetic resin (as recited in Claim 16),** column 2, lines 58-60;
- **the substrate being joined to a rear surface of the veneer (as recited in Claim 16),** column 2, lines 42-44;
- **a light source (as recited in Claim 21),** column 5, lines 1-5; and
- **the light source being located at a rear surface of the substrate (as recited in Claim 21),** as evidenced by column 4, line 68.

LENDERINK discloses all the limitations of the claims, except the light source being variable in at least one of color and amount of emitted light (as recited in Claim 22), the light source including a light guide plate for providing an uniform light output (as recited in Claim 23), or at least one of a liquid crystal device (LCD) or a light emitting diode (LED) being provided on a rear surface of the substrate to provide a given indication (as recited in Claim 25).

MCMANIGAL discloses an artificial window device having:

- **a frame,** Figure 1, reference number 12;
- **the frame simulating a window,** column 2, lines 52-56;
- **video means,** Figure 1, reference number 10;

- **the video means being supported by the frame**, column 2, lines 67 and 68;
- **the video means being a LCD**, column 3, lines 65-66;
- **the video means presenting a predetermined scene**, column 3, lines 3-15.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the claimed invention was made to combine the translucent wood veneer blinds of LENDERINK with the artificial window device of MCMANIGAL, to further enhance the effect provided by such artificial window device by providing the "window" with the decorative blinds of LENDERINK, as per the teachings of MCMANIGAL (see column 5, lines 46 and 47).

Regarding the light source being variable in at least one of color and amount of emitted light (as recited in Claim 22), the LCD video means of MCMANIGAL were considered to inherently meet such limitation.

Regarding the light source including a light guide plate for providing an uniform light output (as recited in Claim 23), it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the claimed invention was made to use such light guide plate, since the Examiner takes Official Notice that light guide plates are not only old and well known in the art, but a standard feature of LCD light sources. One would have being motivated since light guide plates provide uniform illumination in a substantially flat and compact housing.

Relevant Prior Art

10. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Sween (U.S. Pat. 2,829,081), **Ohsumi et al.** (U.S. Pat. Nos. 5,264,062 and 5,338,592 and 6,129,985), **Kawata et al.** (U.S. Pat. 6,025,064) and Japanese Patent Application Publication (ID No. 3-30922) disclose wood-based materials having translucent wood veneers attached to transparent substrates.

McManigal (U.S. Pat. 5,251,392) and **Hecker** (U.S. Pat. 5,426,879) disclose artificial window devices including back-illuminated picture means.

Shaw (U.S. Pat. 4,674,122), **Hathaway et al.** (U.S. Pat. 5,050,946), **Tokunaga** (U.S. Pat. 5,375,043), **Ohta et al.** (U.S. Pat. 5,617,251) and **Kawachi et al.** (U.S. Pat. 6,220,741) disclose back-lighted LCD panels having light source including light guide plates.

Response to Arguments

11. Applicant's arguments filed September 17, 2004, with respect to claims 16-27 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ismael Negron whose telephone number is (571) 272-2376. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday from 9:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Sandra L. O'Shea, can be reached on (571) 272-2378. The facsimile machine number for the Art Group is (703) 872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications maybe obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, go to <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) toll-free at 866-217-9197.


Sandra O'Shea
Supervisory Patent Examiner
Technology Center 2800


Inr

May 4, 2004